

Dear Colleague:

By this time, many of you will have had experience with the FastLane system at the National Science Foundation (NSF) <<http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/>>. As you may remember, in July 1998 the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) announced a phased approach to the implementation of FastLane, beginning in FY 1999, and reaching full implementation by the end of FY2000 <<http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?nsf9937>>. This MPS initiative was undertaken as part of the overall NSF plan to put into place a fully-integrated electronic proposal and award system (Important Notice No. 123).

Since the beginning of the MPS FastLane implementation in October 1998, many improvements have been made in the process and procedures. These have enabled the Directorate to provide higher quality service to our customers and user community. In addition, the FastLane system has made it possible for us to identify unforeseen opportunities for improvements in records management and access to proposal data.

We recognize that the transition toward a paperless proposal and award system has been challenging, and that enhancements to the FastLane System must be continuously developed and implemented. A key element to such progress, however, is the continued leadership that the MPS community has demonstrated in recent months. Because of your cooperation and support, MPS is moving forward with the previously announced implementation of FastLane in all Directorate programs starting July 1, 1999. A brief summary of our implementation plan, as well as the names of the Divisional FastLane Contacts, are shown on the following page.

Support for implementation throughout the Directorate will remain the same as last year, with Ms. Florence Rabanal acting as the MPS FastLane Coordinator. As always, she is interested in hearing your views about upcoming procedural changes, and is available to answer any questions you might have. She may be reached at frabanal@nsf.gov, or by phone at 703-306-1998. Questions about proposal content or programmatic procedures within the Divisions should be addressed to the relevant Program Director. Information about the MPS Directorate, its staff, programs, and our FastLane implementation plans may be found at <<http://www.nsf.gov/home/mps>>.

Again, let me extend my appreciation and thanks for your participation and patience as we look forward to another successful year.

With best wishes,

Robert A. Eisenstein, Assistant Director
Directorate for Mathematical and Physical
Sciences

Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences
FastLane Implementation as of July 1, 1999

The following provides a brief explanation of the major FastLane functions, which will be required starting July 1, 1999. Complete instructions for using these functions, as well as all others, are provided on the FastLane Web Page at <<http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/>>.

Proposal Submission. Full electronic submission *via* FastLane is required for all MPS proposals, except those sent in response to Foundation-wide solicitations, such as the Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) or Research Experiences for Undergraduates Sites (REU) Program, which may have specific requirements.

The signed proposal Cover Sheet (NSF Form 1207) should be submitted in accordance with the requirements in the current NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) <<http://www/cgi-bin/getpub?nsf992>>. At this time, GPG instructions (NSF 99-2) require that the signed proposal cover sheet (NSF Form 1207) be forwarded to the following address and received by NSF within five working days following proposal submission:

National Science Foundation
DIS-FastLane Cover Sheet
4201 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22230

Proposal Reviews. All programs will continue to require electronic receipt of *ad-hoc* and panel reviews. Additionally, programs will require electronic submission of panel summaries.

Post-Award Notifications and Requests. As was previously required, all post-award administrative actions (*i.e.* post-award notifications and requests), such as no-cost extensions, changes in a proposal's effective date, or changes in a grant's objective or scope must be submitted *via* FastLane.

Progress and Final Project Reports. Use of the FastLane Project Reporting System for submission is required for all annual (formerly NSF Form 1328), final (formerly NSF 98A), and interim reports.

Support for FastLane-related activities should be directed to the MPS Divisional contacts, whose names are shown in the following table:

ORGANIZATION/DIVISION	FASTLANE CONTACT/ E-MAIL/ PHONE NO.
Office of the Assistant Director	Florence Rabanal Oadfl@nsf.gov / 703-306-1998
Astronomical Sciences	Kim Elliott Astfl@nsf.gov / 703-306-1804
Chemistry	Paul Spyropoulos Chefl@nsf.gov / 703-306-1022
Mathematical Sciences	Keith Crank Dmsfl@nsf.gov / 703-306-1885
Materials Research	Maxine Jefferson Dmrfl@nsf.gov / 703-306-0541
Physics	Ramona Winkelbauer Phyfl@nsf.gov / 703-306-0544

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Grantees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities, and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with federal statutes, regulations, and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF (unless otherwise specified in the eligibility requirements for a particular program).

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the program announcement or contact the program coordinator at (703) 306-1636.

The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation regarding NSF programs, employment, or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 306-0090 or through FIRS on 1-800-877-8339.

PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the review process; to applicant institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing information as part of the review process or in order to coordinate programs; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer; Division of Administrative Services; National Science Foundation; Arlington, VA 22230.

YEAR 2000 REMINDER

In accordance with Important Notice No. 120 dated June 27, 1997, Subject: Year 2000 Computer Problem, NSF awardees are reminded of their responsibility to take appropriate actions to ensure that the NSF activity being supported is not

adversely affected by the Year 2000 problem. Potentially affected items include: computer systems, databases, and equipment. The National Science Foundation should be notified if an awardee concludes that the Year 2000 will have a significant impact on its ability to carry out an NSF funded activity. Information concerning Year 2000 activities can be found on the NSF web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/oirm/y2k/start.htm> .

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